



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
Office of the President Ms Ursula von der Leyen

Head of Cabinet

Brussels, 20.09.2022
Ares (2022) 4412504

Dear Professor,

President von der Leyen has asked me to thank you for your email by which you inform us of the European Financial Congress proposals to introduce *'a special charge (a quasi-fiscal fee) on selected Russian goods and services imported by EU countries'* and also to introduce *'a certificate of primary origin of goods and services'* for the prevention of circumvention.

First and foremost, we would like to thank you and the European Financial Congress for your strong sense of civic-mindedness and resolve to safeguard European values. The harrowing events that are unfolding in Ukraine are a stark reminder of the importance of European unity, solidarity and our moral compass to do what is right. The European Commission condemns, in the strongest possible terms, Russia's unprovoked and unjustified military attack against Ukraine. By its illegal military actions, Russia is grossly violating international law and the principles of the Charter of the United Nations, undermining European and global security and stability, and showing a complete and utter disregard for human life. The European Union as a whole, backed by its allies and partners across the globe, stands with the Ukrainian people facing this brutal injustice that is threatening the lives and destroying the livelihoods of our fellow Europeans.

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The European Union reacted decisively to the Russian invasion of Ukraine. Within days of Russia launching its military aggression against Ukraine, we had imposed the largest sanctions packages in our Union's history. The extent and weight of these sanctions are unparalleled. These measures increase the cost for Russia to carry out its inhumane military intervention and place a considerable constraint on its military and industrial capabilities. In a resounding show of international solidarity with Ukraine, numerous countries worldwide have completely aligned with the EU's restrictive measures. We are sending a message that the war and its support will come at a cost. To this end, the EU has to date adopted several sweeping sanctions packages, which are already taking a heavy toll on the Russian economy and are therefore hampering President Putin's war efforts. The Commission will not hesitate to propose additional measures to the Council if the situation on the ground continues to deteriorate and, in this context, we take note of your suggestions, which we will consider together with other options for further strengthening the sanctions. We are resolute in our unfaltering support for Ukraine and the Ukrainian people.

As far as the circumvention of sanctions is concerned, the Commission is working with Member States and with countries outside the Union towards limiting the possibilities of it occurring, including detecting the origin of goods when these are imported to the EU. In this regard, it is important to note that EU companies and individuals are legally responsible for complying with EU sanctions and cannot engage in sanctions circumvention under penalty of law.

Let me once again express my gratitude to you for the support to the European Union and above all to the values of humanity.

Yours faithfully,



Björn Seibert